

DURE-021; Applicati n No. 09/205,251

COMPLETE LISTING OF CLAIMS INCLUDING AMENDMENTS

1. (currently amended) A method for treating a disease by delivering therapeutic agents into the inner ear of a living subject through the round window niche and the round window membrane thereof, for a period of greater than ~~a month~~ 48 hours, said method comprising:

providing a drug delivery unit comprised of at least one biodegradable synthetic controlled release carrier media material and at least one therapeutic agent combined therewith, said carrier media material releasing said therapeutic agent from said drug delivery unit over time when said drug delivery unit is placed in said round window niche of said subject;

placing said drug delivery unit at least partially in said round window niche of said subject; and

allowing said drug delivery unit in said round window niche to release said therapeutic agent therefrom so that said therapeutic agent comes in contact with said round window membrane, passes therethrough, and enters said inner ear, wherein said therapeutic agent is released over a period of greater than ~~one month~~ 48 hours.

2. - 25. (cancelled)

26. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm.

27. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein said drug delivery unit has a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

28. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm and a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

29. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein said therapeutic agent is to be delivered into said inner ear in microgram or nanogram quantities.

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30. **(new)** A method for treating a disease by delivering therapeutic agents into the inner ear of a living subject through the round window membrane, said method comprising:

providing a drug delivery unit comprised of at least one biodegradable synthetic controlled release carrier media material and at least one therapeutic agent combined therewith,

said carrier media material releasing said therapeutic agent from said drug delivery unit over time when said drug delivery unit is placed substantially within said round window niche;

placing said drug delivery unit substantially within said round window niche; and

allowing said drug delivery unit in said round window niche to release said therapeutic agent therefrom so that said therapeutic agent comes in contact with said round window membrane, passes therethrough, and enters said inner ear, wherein said therapeutic agent is released over a period of greater than 48 hours.

1D²
31. **(new)** The method of claim 30 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm.

32. **(new)** The method of claim 30 wherein said drug delivery unit has a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

33. **(new)** The method of claim 30 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm and a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

34. **(new)** The method of claim 30 wherein said therapeutic agent is to be delivered into said inner ear in microgram or nanogram quantities.

35. **(new)** A method for treating a disease by delivering therapeutic agents into the inner ear of a living subject through the round window membrane, said method comprising:

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providing a drug delivery unit comprised of at least one biodegradable synthetic controlled release carrier media material and at least one therapeutic agent combined therewith,

said carrier media material releasing said therapeutic agent from said drug delivery unit over time when said drug delivery unit is placed completely within said round window niche;

placing said drug delivery unit completely within said round window niche; and
allowing said drug delivery unit in said round window niche to release said therapeutic agent therefrom so that said therapeutic agent comes in contact with said round window membrane, passes therethrough, and enters said inner ear, wherein said therapeutic agent is released over a period of greater than 48 hours.

D² 36. (new) The method of claim 35 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm.

37. (new) The method of claim 35 wherein said drug delivery unit has a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

38. (new) The method of claim 35 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm and a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

39. (new) The method of claim 35 wherein said therapeutic agent is to be delivered into said inner ear in microgram or nanogram quantities.

40. (new) A method for delivering therapeutic agents into the inner ear of a living subject through the round window niche and the round window membrane thereof, said method comprising:

providing a drug delivery apparatus comprising:

an elongate member comprising a first end and a second end; and

a drug delivery unit secured to said first end of said elongate member, said drug delivery unit being comprised of at least one controlled release carrier media material and

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at least one therapeutic agent combined therewith, said carrier media material releasing said therapeutic agent from said drug delivery unit over time when said drug delivery unit is placed in said round window niche of said subject;

placing said first end of said elongate member and said drug delivery unit secured thereto such that said drug delivery unit is placed substantially or completely within said round window niche of said subject; and

allowing said drug delivery unit in said round window niche to release said therapeutic agent therefrom so that said therapeutic agent comes in contact with said round window membrane, passes therethrough, and enters said inner ear, wherein said therapeutic agent is released over a period of greater than 48 hours.

D2 41. (new) The method of claim 40 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm and a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

42. (new) The method of claim 40 wherein said elongate member is comprised of at least one electrically conductive material.

43. (new) A method for treating a disease by delivering therapeutic agents into the inner ear of a living subject through the round window niche and the round window membrane thereof, for a period of greater than 48 hours, said method comprising:

providing a drug delivery unit comprised of at least one synthetic controlled release carrier media material and at least one therapeutic agent combined therewith, said carrier media material releasing said therapeutic agent from said drug delivery unit over time when said drug delivery unit is placed in said round window niche of said subject;

placing said drug delivery unit at least partially in said round window niche of said subject; and

allowing said drug delivery unit in said round window niche to release said therapeutic agent therefrom so that said therapeutic agent comes in contact with said round window membrane, passes therethrough, and enters said inner ear, wherein said therapeutic agent is released over a period of greater than 48 hours.

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44. (new) The method of claim 43 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm.

45. (new) The method of claim 43 wherein said drug delivery unit has a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

46. (new) The method of claim 43 wherein said drug delivery unit has a length of between about 0.5 to 20 mm and a diameter of between about 0.5 to 4 mm.

D2 47. (new) The method of claim 43 wherein said therapeutic agent is to be delivered into said inner ear in microgram or nanogram quantities.

48. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein the biodegradable synthetic controlled release carrier media material is an injectable material.
